

TINICUM, PA – Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-07) attended the Delaware County Environmental Summit on Saturday, February 21, 2009, to discuss the energy and environmental components of the recently enacted American Reinvestment and Recovery Act, known as the Economic Stimulus Bill.

The summit was held at the Cusano Environmental Education Center at the John Heinz Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum. The refuge is administered by the Department of Interior's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and is located in Philadelphia and Delaware Counties. The refuge was established by an act of Congress in 1972 to protect the last 200 acres of freshwater tidal marsh in Pennsylvania. When acquisition is complete, it will consist of 1200 acres of varied habitats. Over the years, the refuge has become a resting and feeding area for more than 280 species of birds, 80 of which nest here. Fox, deer, muskrat, turtles, fish, frogs and a wide variety of wildflowers and plants call the refuge home. The refuge is one of more than 500 refuges in the National Wildlife Refuge System administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The National Wildlife Refuge System is a network of lands and waters managed specifically for the protection of wildlife and its habitat.

"The protection of our environment is not just a moral or quality-of-life issue – it's crucial to our country's prosperity, health, and security," said Congressman Sestak. "That's why I've included Environmental and Energy security as one of the five pillars of national security. Our energy policy requires a comprehensive approach that takes the best advantage of all types of energy, while recognizing the need to accelerate the transition to alternative, clean, and renewable sources."

Provisions of the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act designed to improve our Environmental/Energy security include:

### **Funding for Environmental Clean Up and Clean Water**

This section of the Economic Stimulus creates approximately 375,000 jobs by modernizing our nation's water systems to strengthen the safety and cleanliness of our water and to ensure that 3.4 million rural households have new or improved service; Experts note that \$16 billion in water projects could be quickly obligated [National Governors' Association and the Association of State and Interstate Water Pollution Control Administrators]; expands efforts at environmental restoration, flood protection, hydropower, and navigation infrastructure and providing clean, reliable drinking water to rural areas critical to the economy through the Army Corp of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation; strengthens environmental cleanup efforts for Superfund,

cleanup of petroleum leaks from underground storage tanks, nuclear waste cleanup, and brownfields that have the added benefit of creating jobs.

- \$18 billion for clean water, flood control, and environmental restoration
  - o Clean Water State Revolving Fund: EPA estimates a \$388 billion funding gap. The Association of State and Interstate Water Pollution Control Administrators found that 26 states have \$10 billion in approved water projects.

### **Benefits for Pennsylvania:**

- o \$157.6 million through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund to address the backlog of clean water infrastructure needs
- o Drinking Water State Revolving Fund: The National Governors Association reported that there are \$6 billion in ready-to-go projects, which could quickly be obligated.
- o Rural Water and Waste Disposal: In 2008, there were \$2.4 billion in requests for water and waste loans and \$990 million for water and waste grants went unfunded.
- o Corps of Engineers: The Corps has a construction backlog of \$61 billion.
- o Bureau of Reclamation: The Bureau has backlogs of more than \$1 billion in rural water projects and water reuse and recycling projects.
- o Watershed Infrastructure: Funds for the Natural Resources Conservation Service watershed improvement programs to design and build flood protection and water quality projects, repair aging dams, and purchase and restore conservation easements in river flood zones.
- o International Boundary and Water Commission: Funds to repair flood control systems along the international segment of the Rio Grande damaged by hurricane Katrina and other serious storms.

• **\$6 billion is directed towards environmental cleanup of former weapon production and energy research sites.**

• **\$6 billion for local clean and drinking water infrastructure improvements.**

• **\$1.2 billion for EPA's nationwide environmental cleanup programs, including Superfund.**

- **\$1.38 billion to support \$3.8 billion in loans and grants for needed water and waste disposal facilities in rural areas.**

*Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the U.S. Congress.*

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